
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

NEW \$7-MILLION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPENS IN LANGLEY

LANGLEY – Langley MLA Mary Polak joined the Langley school board, students, staff and community leaders today for a ribbon-cutting ceremony today to officially open the \$7-million R.C. Garnett elementary school.

“I am proud that we have a school here in Langley that serves as a model for the rest of B.C. and Canada,” said Polak. “R.C. Garnett is both a neighbourhood school and a demonstration school focused on literacy. Using new programs and teaching techniques, the school is helping B.C. achieve its goal of being the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction in North America.”

As a literacy demonstration school, R.C. Garnett provides opportunities for teachers around the province to observe best-practices and innovative teaching methods in a classroom setting. The school works with Trinity Western University to provide student teachers with opportunities to see experienced teachers work. In return, Garnett students have access to special science and physical education programs at the university.

“The partnerships taking place between the school, the district, Trinity Western, the community and the Province is providing the students of R.C. Garnett with extra educational opportunities, while teaching them the benefit of community spirit and cooperation,” said Fort Langley-Aldergrove MLA Rich Coleman.

R.C. Garnett features a videoconferencing classroom that webcasts live classroom lessons to teachers around the province and across Canada. The school was designed with larger classrooms and more classroom windows to allow teachers to observe in classrooms and in the hallway, as well as special observation rooms. This design is the first of its kind in British Columbia.

“First and foremost, this new school provides students and staff with a safe, modern place to learn and work,” said Education Minister Shirley Bond. “The school also demonstrates the kind of innovative thinking that goes on every day in B.C. classrooms. Staff at R.C. Garnett have shown real leadership by constantly striving for new and better teaching methods that help improve their students’ achievement levels.”

The school cost \$7 million, with the Province investing \$6.8 million. The Township of Langley provided \$91,000 to build exterior washrooms for people using the adjacent municipal playfields and the school district contributed \$50,000 for the videoconferencing classroom.

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R.C. Garnett opened in September 2006 with 219 students in kindergarten-Grade 5. In September 2007, the school will include Grade 6, with Grade 7 being added in September 2008. The school was built to accommodate an increased population in the Willoughby/Willowbrook area, which has seen an increase in residential construction over the last few years.

"R.C. Garnett is a place where everybody learns," said Langley board chair Steve Burton. "Our own teachers and teachers from across the province will be coming here to observe best practice in action, and we're proud to have a wonderful facility like this in Langley. This school like this is a tribute to everyone who has worked together to make it happen."

Since 2001-02, six capital projects worth \$14.9 million have been completed in the Langley school district. During the same period, the Province has also invested \$22.8 million for buses and maintenance projects in the district.

The Province has spent over \$1 billion on school construction around British Columbia since 2001, including 26 new schools, 32 replacements, 140 additions and 22 renovation projects. By the end of 2008-09, the Province will have invested more than \$2.8 billion in school capital and maintenance projects.

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